

First Peter 2:21-25
Godward Submission in the Workplace part 4

Purpose: to emphasize the completed substitutionary work of Jesus for our sins

Introduction: This section provides the motivation to fulfill the command to submit to ones boss in 2:18-20. It is filled with references to Isaiah 53. Consider Peter's use of Isaiah 52-53 in Acts 3:11-26; 4:23-31; and 10:34-43.

- 1) The sovereign call of God the Father—2:21a ²¹ *For [γάρ] unto this* (2:20; Godward, patient endurance of unjust suffering while doing good; even as we anticipate a final reward) *you^{pl} have been called* [aor. pass. ind. καλέω] (by God),
 - a) See God's calling in: 1:15; 2:9; 5:10
 - i) Remember Paul's words to young believers in Acts 14:22.
 - b) This suffering is therefore not a haphazard sequence of unrelated events or a result of bad karma.
- 2) The suffering of Christ—2:21b *that [ὅτι] even Christ suffered* [aor. act. ind. πάσχω] ...
 - a) Substitutionary—*on behalf of* [ὑπέρ] *us*
 - i) CT reads “*for you^{pl}*”
 - ii) Concerning our sins—3:18; 4:1
 - b) Exemplary—*leaving behind* [pres. act. ptc. ὑπολιμπάνω] *for you^{pl} a pattern* [ὑπογραμμός] *that [ὅτι] you^{pl} should follow* [aor. act. subj. ἐπακολουθέω] *in His footprints* [ἵχνος],
 - i) The pattern that young students followed to learn their letters; in this case like Dad's footprints in the snow that small children try to follow.
 - ii) He deliberately, by the power of the Holy Spirit for the glory of the Father, lived the perfect life and thus set the standard that we are to follow.
- 3) The footprints of Jesus include—2:22-23
 - a) Negatively—what Jesus did not do
 - i) He did not sin—Isaiah 53:9 (perfect innocence)
 - (1) In His conduct—²² “*WHO DID NO SIN* [ἁμαρτία],
 - (2) In His speech—*NOR WAS DECEIT* [δόλος] *FOUND IN HIS MOUTH*,”
 - (a) Remember James 3:2 and the mark of maturity
 - ii) He did not retaliate—Isaiah 53:7-8 (even in the face of severe difficulty)
 - (1) In the context of verbal abuse—²³ *and He, ... was not verbally abusing in return* [impf. act. ind. ἀντιλοιδорέω];
 - (a) Reality of the abuse—*while being verbally abused* [pres. pass. ptc. λοιδορέω]
 - (i) Jesus was: accused of blaspheming, deceiving, political insurrection, refusing to pay taxes, mocked, derided by the thief, etc.

- (ii) Similar later on in 3:9
- (2) In the context of suffering—*He was not threatening* [impf. act. ind. ἀπειλέω] (Isaiah 53:7)
 - (a) When? *while suffering* [pres. act. ptc. πάσχω]
 - (i) During His trials Jesus was: slapped, beaten with a reed, mocked, scourged, forced to carry His own cross, etc.
- b) Positively—what Jesus did do (what enabled him to not retaliate)
 - What gave Jesus the strength to refrain from threatening and verbally abusing those who mistreated Him?
 - i) *but* [δέ] (He) *kept on entrusting* [impf. act. ind. παραδίδωμι] (the entirety of His situation, including His own vindication and the punishment of His enemies) *to the One judging* [pres. act. ptc. κρίνω] *justly* [δικαίως]. (Isaiah 53:6, 8, 12)
 - (1) See judging in: 1:17; 4:5, 6
 - (2) Cf. the example of Jeremiah 11:18-23
 - ii) God always judges in conformity to the standard of truth and holiness, even when our circumstances do not resolve quickly.
- 4) Further explanation of Jesus' unique suffering—2:24
 - a) Selfless suffering—²⁴ *And He Himself, in His own (real, physical) body, carried up* [aor. act. ind. ἀναφέρω] *our* (including Peter's, but not Jesus') *sins* [ἁμαρτία] *up on to the tree* [ξύλον] (Isaiah 53:4, 12; Deuteronomy 21:23)
 - Sin is not to be considered an unholy offering to be presented on the altar. Rather the cross is the place to which Jesus carried our sins for their punishment and suffered their curse in our place.
 - Jesus, who loves righteousness and hates iniquity (1:19), willingly carried this heavy load of terrible sins that were not His own.
 - i) Why? *in order that* [ἵνα] *we ...* (for our holiness)
 - (1) Negative purpose—we are separated **from** sin—*having died* [ἀπογενόμενος] *to sins* [ἁμαρτία] (which He carried up on to the tree)
 - (2) Positively—we are separated **to** righteousness—*may live* [aor. act. subj. ζάω] *to righteousness* [δικαιοσύνη],
 - (a) Contrast singular righteousness with plural sins
 - (b) How? By accomplishing the death of death in the death of Jesus, He secured the gift of the Holy Spirit Who regenerates, justifies, and sanctifies us for His glory.
 - b) Beneficial suffering—*by Whose wound* [μώλωψ] (from beatings) *you^{pl} have been healed* [aor. pass. ind. ἰάομαι], (Isaiah 53:5)
 - i) Slaves were often recipients of bloody wounds from their masters (2:20).
 - ii) Theodoret (393-458 AD): “A new and strange method of healing; the Physician suffered the cost, and the sick received the healing!”
 - iii) Sin is, in some sense, a fatal spiritual illness, that reaches all people and infects every aspect of our lives. There is no cure apart from Christ.

- 5) Why should we follow His footprints?—2:25 ²⁵ because [γάρ] ...
- This explains why the healing by Jesus' wounds (2:24) were necessary
 - a) The characteristic past—*you^{pl} were* [impf. act. ind. εἰμί] *as sheep* [πρόβατον] *being lead astray* [pres. pass. ptc. πλανᾶω] (Isaiah 53:6)
 - b) The confident present because of a change of direction—*but now* [ἀλλὰ νύν] *you^{pl} have turned back* [aor. pass. ind. ἐπιστρέφω] *to the Shepherd* [ποιμήν] (care) *and Overseer* [ἐπίσκοπος] (authority) *of your^{pl} souls* [ψυχή]. (Psalm 23; Isaiah 40:11; Jeremiah 31:10; Ezekiel 34:11-16; Zechariah 11:4-14)
 - i) Nothing that occurs to His sheep escapes His notice. He not only leads, feeds, and sustains his own, but also guides, directs, and protects them.
- 6) Summary and applications
- a) It is only as I recognize that my sins caused His death on the cross, and that Jesus willingly took my sins and my guilt, and He endured the just penalty for them, that I can begin to know the good news of God's love for me.
 - i) God knew from eternity past what specific sins needed to be paid for, revealed that His Son would one day come, and then sent His Son at just the right time to accomplish that specific task.
 - ii) Christ accepted, without rebellion, the unjust treatment shown Him by sinners, being confident that the Father would ultimately vindicate him.
 - b) Will we trust Him in the midst of our unjust sufferings at work? Can we follow the pattern Jesus has left behind for us?
- 7) **Take-home truth:** God touches our duty, and transforms it.